

Appl. No. 10/767,983
Amdt. January 20, 2006
Reply to Office action of November 22, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the remarks and amendments provided herein.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indicated allowability of claims 3 and 4 if rewritten into independent form. Claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1, which is believed to be allowable for the reasons discussed herein. Thus, claims 3 and 4 have not been amended. Applicant, however, reserves the right to cast such claims into independent form at a later date, if necessary.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Marrapese (U.S. Patent No. 2,797,592). Traversal of this rejection is made for at least the following reasons. Marrapese does not disclose a crashable connecting portion adapted to be crashed upon an impact force exerted on the operation portion, as required by independent claim 1. Similarly, Marrapese does not disclose a crashable portion adapted to be collapsed upon an impact force exerted upon an outer knob, as recited in independent claim 8. The Examiner relies on hub 11, body 8, and web 12 of Marrapese as being equivalent to the claimed mounting portion, operation portion, and crashable connecting portion, respectively. The Examiner contends that because web 12 is thinner than other parts of the device, it would be crashable relative to other parts of the knob. Applicant strongly disagrees. As illustrated in Fig. 3 of Marrapese, teeth 20, which are formed on a lower portion of the body 8, contact and engage with corresponding teeth 19 formed in rim 6, while the bottom portion of the hub 11 never makes contact with the rim or any other structure. Further, the hub 11 is adapted such that it is axially slidable with respect to the post 2. Because of this configuration, neither the hub 11 nor the web 12 would be affected by impact force to the body. Any impact force applied to the body 8 would be absorbed by the body alone and thus, would not crash or collapse the web 12. Each of the other disclosed embodiments of Marrapese either disclose a similar structure or do not disclose a connecting portion that is thinner than other parts of the device. Because, Marrapese does not disclose each and every limitation as set forth in claims 1 and 8, Marrapese cannot anticipate such claims or

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claims 2, 5, 6 and 11-13, which respectively depend therefrom. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 7, 9, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Marrapese in view of Howie, Jr., (U.S. Patent No. 5,469,758). Traversal of this rejection is made for at least the following reasons. Claims 7, 9, and 10 depend from one of claims 1 or 8, which are allowable over Marrapese for the reasons discussed above. Howie, Jr. does not make up for the aforementioned deficiencies of Marrapese with respect to claims 1 and 8. Thus, the combination of Marrapese and Howie, Jr. cannot render claims 1 or 8 or claims 7, 9, and 10, which depend therefrom. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 36416.

Respectfully submitted,
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